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39th Juvenile Recovered Since February 2007

As part of the national initiative, Operation Cross Country, the South East Michigan Crimes Against Children (SEMCAC) Task Force recovered their 39th juvenile since February 2007. Operation Cross Country's national initiative ran from June 18th through June 22nd, 2008. Nationwide, we recovered 22 juveniles and made 345 arrests. Over 300 federal, state, county, and local law enforcement agencies participated in Operation Cross Country.

The SEMCAC Task Force was created in February 2007 as part of the Innocence Lost Initiative as a reaction to cases Michigan law enforcement encountered. The agencies participating in the SEMCAC Task Force include the Madison Heights Police Department, Detroit Police Department, Wayne County Sheriff's Office, Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, Michigan State Police, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the United States Attorney's Office.

As part of the Operation Cross Country Initiative, the SEMCAC Task Force recovered 1 juvenile and arrested 57 individuals in Michigan. Of the 57 individuals arrested, 5 of them were pimps/ring leaders. Since its inception, the SEMCAC Task Force has arrested over 100 individuals and recovered 39 juveniles.

Today, many prostitution rings are sophisticated and inter-state in nature. They rely on the Internet and other electronic media to advertise and solicit customers. The most egregious of these prostitution rings abduct or recruit juveniles from all walks of life. These juveniles are forced into working for pimps or madames, often subjected to violence and relocated to areas

where they know no one in order to strengthen the hold these groups have on the juveniles.

Special Agent in Charge of the FBI, Andrew G. Arena stated, "As a nation, we must first ensure the safety and security of our children. They are the very future of our country. As a parent and the Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit FBI, I pledge continued support and resources for the aggressive investigation and dismantlement of these organizations."

Lieutenant Bennie Bowers, of the Michigan State Police provided the following statement, "The domestic human trafficking of children throughout Michigan and the United States will not be tolerated, and the individuals responsible for exploiting our children will be sought after and prosecuted."

If anyone has any information on a child who has been exploited, please contact any of the participating SEMCAC Task Force agencies.